

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (previously presented) A method of assaying for folate in a folate containing sample, wherein at least some of said folate comprises at least one attached glutamate residue, said method comprising:

subjecting said sample to hydrolysis to release paraaminobenzoic acid, p-aminobenzoyl glutamic acid, or a salt thereof; contacting the released paraaminobenzoic acid, p-aminobenzoyl glutamic acid, salt, or a diazo derivative thereof, with a binding partner therefor; and directly or indirectly detecting the resulting binding partner: paraaminobenzoic acid, binding partner: p- aminobenzoyl glutamic acid, or salt or derivative combination wherein said method does not comprise any chromatographic separation steps.

2. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said sample is a blood derived sample.

3. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 2~~ claim 1 wherein said binding partner is selected from an antibody, an antibody fragment, a single chain antibody, a single chain antibody fragment, an oligopeptide, an oligonucleotide and a small organic molecule.

4. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said small organic molecule is an aromatic tertiary amine, phenol or phenol derivative capable of forming a diazo compound with paradiazobenzoic acid (PDBA) or paradiazobenzoyl glutamate (PDBA-glu).
5. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1 wherein said hydrolysis comprises treating said sample with a metal catalyst under acidic conditions.
6. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1 wherein said hydrolysis comprises treating said sample with microwave radiation.
7. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1 wherein said hydrolysis comprises treatment with an oxidising agent.
8. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 7 wherein the oxidising agent is hydrogen peroxide and/or potassium permanganate.
9. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 8~~ claim 1 wherein said hydrolysis comprises treatment with a reducing agent.
10. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 9 wherein the reducing agent is sodium borohydride.

11. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1 wherein said hydrolysis comprises oxidative photolysis.

12. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said oxidative photolysis is carried out in the presence of a photosensitiser.

13. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1 wherein said sample is incubated in the presence of naturally occurring and/or added enzymes whereby to remove all but the terminal glutamate residue from said folate and wherein the product of the hydrolysis is PABA-glu.

14. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 12~~ claim 1 wherein said sample is incubated in the presence of at least one added enzyme, whereby to remove all glutamate residues from said folate, and wherein the product of the hydrolysis is PABA.

15. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1 wherein said binding partner: paraaminobenzoic acid, binding partner:p-aminobenzoyl glutamic acid, or salt or derivative combination is detected directly by absorbence or fluorescence.

16. (currently amended) A method as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 14~~ claim 1 wherein said binding partner: paraaminobenzoic acid, binding partner:p-aminobenzoyl glutamic acid, or salt or derivative combination is detected indirectly by means of a secondary binding partner.

17. (currently amended) A kit for use in the performance of the assay of the invention, said kit comprising:

- i) a folate hydrolysis reagent; and
- ii) a PABA, PABA-glu, PDBA or PDBA-glu binding partner[[:]] .

18. (previously presented) A kit as claimed in claim 17 additionally comprising an enzyme or enzyme cocktail.

19. (currently amended) A kit as claimed in claim 17 ~~or claim 18~~ additionally comprising a PABA to PDBA or PABA-glu to PDBA-glu converting reagent.

20. (currently amended) A kit as claimed in ~~any of claims 17 to 19~~ claim 17 additionally comprising a secondary binding partner.